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SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT

Of

The City of Bakersfield General Plan

Bakersfield.

City planning
Highways

Bakersfield

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AUTHORITY

Section 65302 (h) requires a Scenic Highways Element of all city and county general plans, as follows:

> The plan shall include a "scenic highway element for the development, establishment, and protection of scenic highways pursuant to the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 260) of Chapter 2 of Division 1 of the Streets and Highways Code."

Section 263 of the Streets and Highways Code comprises the State's Master Plan of Eligible Highways. Any of these highways, illustrated on the following map, is eligible to become qualified as an Official State Scenic Highway should a local governmental unit having jurisdiction over the adjacent lands decide to participate in the program.

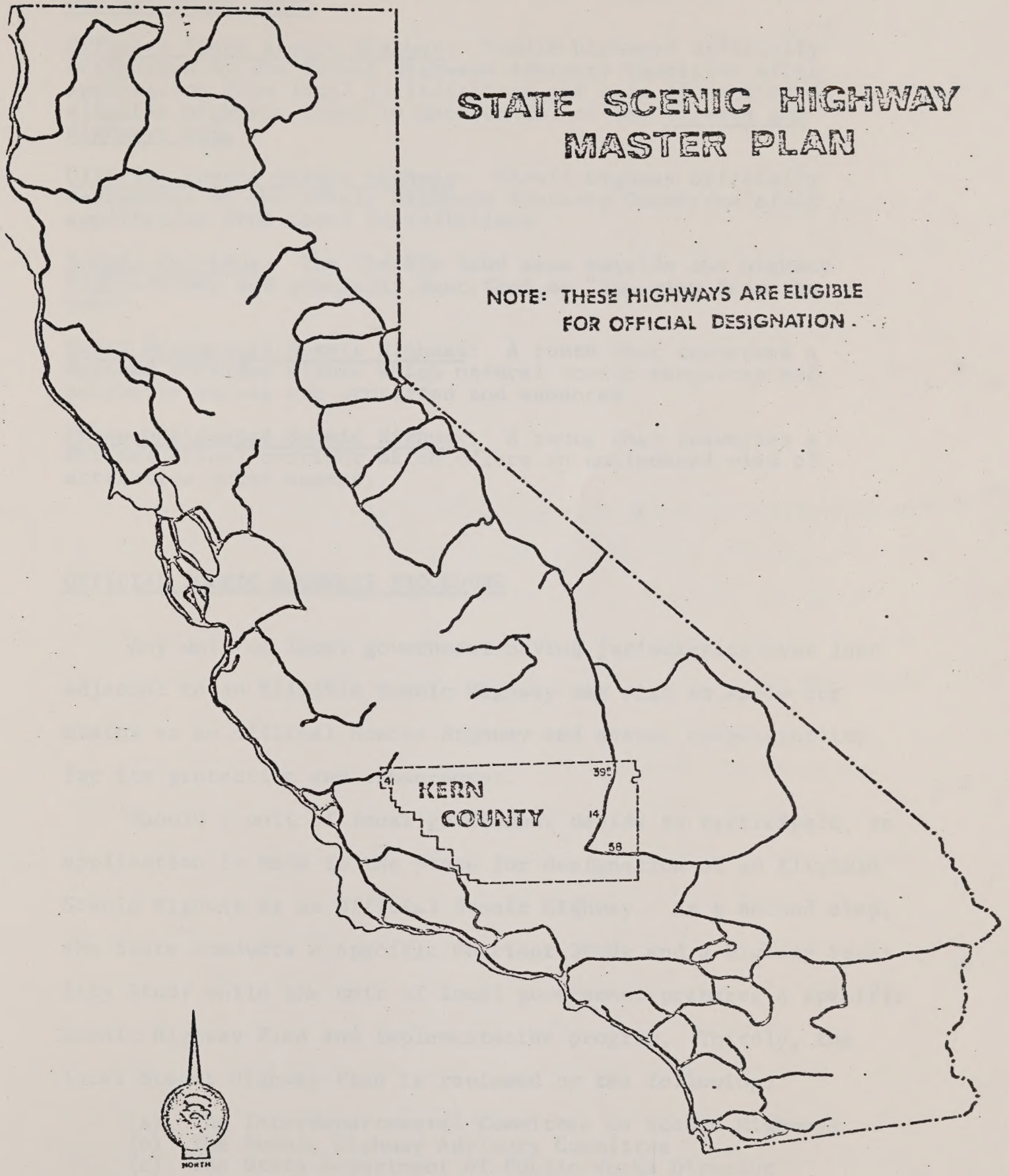
Section 154 of the Streets and Highways Code encourages a system of local scenic highways to complement the State system, as follows:

> "The (State) department (of Public Works) shall encourage the construction and development by counties of portions of the county highways as official scenic highways....(and) the department may authorize the county in which the highway is located to designate the highway as an official county scenic highway, and the department shall so indicate the highway in its publications and maps."

Local jurisdictions and other public agencies having jurisdiction (federal, state, local) are encouraged to coordinate their activities in initiating and conducting activities leading to official designation of eligible scenic highways.

STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY MASTER PLAN

NOTE: THESE HIGHWAYS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR OFFICIAL DESIGNATION.



NO SCALE

KERN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Official State Scenic Highway: Scenic highways officially designated by the Scenic Highways Advisory Committee after application from local jurisdictions and only if on list of eligible highways found in Section 263 of the Streets and Highways Code.

Official County Scenic Highway: Scenic highway officially designated by the Scenic Highways Advisory Committee after application from local jurisdictions.

Scenic Corridor: The visible land area outside the highway right-of-way and generally described as "the view from the road".

Rural Designated Scenic Highway: A route that traverses a defined corridor within which natural scenic resources and aesthetic values are protected and enhanced.

Urban Designated Scenic Highway: A route that traverses a defined visual corridor which offers an unhindered view of attractive urban scenes.

OFFICIAL SCENIC HIGHWAYS PROCEDURE

Any unit of local government having jurisdiction over land adjacent to an Eligible Scenic Highway may wish to apply for status as an official Scenic Highway and assume responsibility for its protection and enhancement.

Should a unit of local government decide to participate, an application is made to the State for designation of an Eligible Scenic Highway as an Official Scenic Highway. As a second step, the State conducts a specific Corridor Study and a Highway Facility Study while the unit of local government prepares a specific Scenic Highway Plan and implementation program, Thirdly, the local Scenic Highway Plan is reviewed by the following:

(a) The Interdepartmental Committee on Scenic Highways
(b) The Scenic Highway Advisory Committee
(c) The State Department of Public Works Director

Fourth, the eligible highway may be designated as an official Scenic Highway in which case the route may be indicated as such

on maps and other official publications and will be signed accordingly . The State also encourages the designation of eligible county scenic highways which may similarly be designated as official County Scenic Highways.

As a means of enforcement, the Scenic Highway Advisory Committee, upon finding that the corridor no longer meets the minimum standards for designation as prescribed by the State, may recommend to the State Public Works Director that official designation be revoked, in which case reference as official designation will be deleted from official publications.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Presently, there are no eligible scenic highways pursuant to Section 263 of the Streets and Highways Code near the City of Bakersfield. Therefore, the City would not have the option of participating in the State Scenic Highways program unless Section 263 and the State Scenic Highway Master Plan were amended by legislative action.

The County of Kern, however, has designated nine eligible county routes, in addition to the three eligible scenic routes in the State Master Plan. These routes, described in the appendix, are contained in the Scenic Highways Element of the Kern County General Plan, adopted August 5, 1974. None of these routes are within the jurisdiction of the City of Bakersfield, although several could be in the future in the event of annexations.

In the event that the City of Bakersfield should annex a portion of the county which contains a County Scenic Highway, it is recommended that the city continue to preserve this portion of the highway in a manner which is consistent with contiguous portions of the county highway. The City should choose, in such a

case, to adopt the following goal and policies:

Goal: To protect and enhance scenic highways and lands adjacent to scenic highways.

Policy: It is the policy of the City of Bakersfield to coordinate its Scenic Highway Element in a manner complementary with its Circulation, Open Space and Land Use Elements of the General Plan.

Policy: It is the policy of the City of Bakersfield to recognize and honor official County Scenic Highways should portions become annexed to the City of Bakersfield.

Policy: In the event of annexations of County Scenic Highways, it is the policy of the City of Bakersfield to develop standards for the enhancement of scenic corridors in order to implement the scenic highway concept as set forth in the Streets and Highway Code.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the City exercise its due powers to protect and enhance existing natural and man-made resources included in the Scenic Highways Element of the General Plan. Such efforts should focus on the prevention and gradual elimination of unsightly development which may otherwise occur within scenic corridors. Should development be desirable with a scenic corridor, such development should be of the highest possible quality and should be regulated in a manner which will complement or blend with the adjacent scenic vistas rather than compete with them.

There are many possible methods of implementing this concept through the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, acquisition of easements, the California Land Conservation Act, etc. Should the Commission decide to accept this alternative, a detailed program should be worked out which addresses the issue comprehensively with the Open Space, Conservation and Land Use Elements.

Kern County proposed, for example, a Scenic Highway (SC) Overlay Zone designed to be applied within the boundaries of a Scenic Highway Corridor. This zone, in recognition of the value of enhancement of scenic resources, is an attempt to modify and supplement the provisions of the basic underlying zones within a corridor to assure the exclusion of incompatible uses and the enhancement of the aesthetic quality of a view.

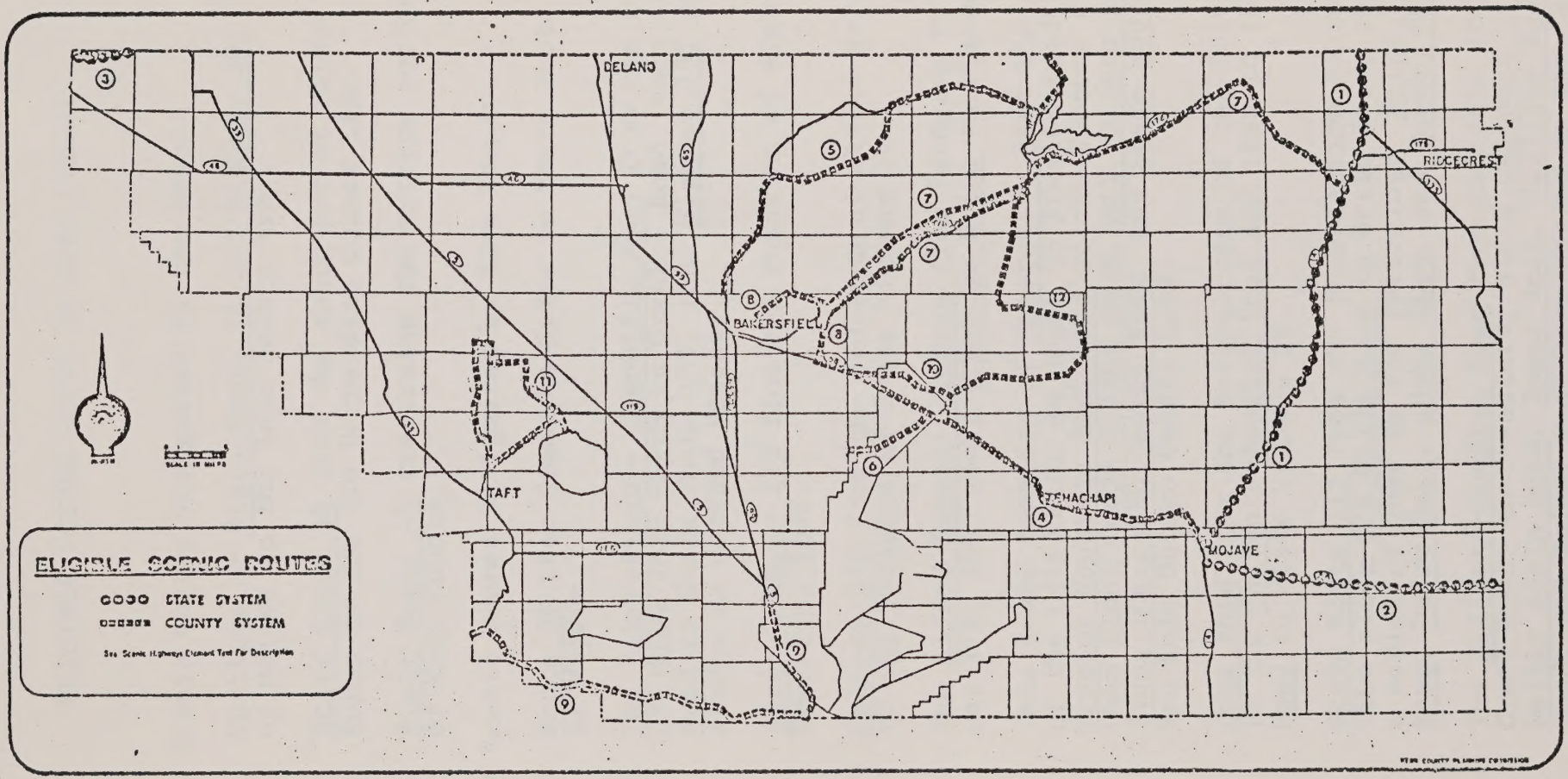
At this point, CD staff feels that the SC Overlay Zone is worthy of detailed study, but should be considered within the comprehensive context of a workable general plan, zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

RECOMMENDED STANDARDS

Minimum standards for the design of scenic corridors are necessary for a scenic highway to remain scenic. The following standards are suggested for consideration as the kinds of activities the city may choose to enforce as part of its scenic corridor program.

1. The establishment of general alignment and grade to fit the scenic character of the area to be traversed.
   a. Curvilinear alignments should be stressed.
   b. The highway profile should be rolled to fit the topography.
2. The reduction to a minimum of all roadway cut and fill scars.
   a. Elmination of cuts or fill wherever possible. This may be accomplished through the use of tunnels and/or bridges when necessary.
   b. Flatten or contour all grades and landscape slopes where they cannot be eliminated.
   c. Acquisition of wider rights of way or scenic easements should be encouraged.
      (1) Access control is necessary.
      (2) The elimination of outdoor advertising and unsightly development through zoning should be required.
   d. The provision of vegetation screens for the purpose of hiding objectionable views.
   e. Selective clearing of vegetation to open up or provide views of desirable scenic qualities.
   f. The location of and/or design of structures with an intent to achieve beauty or aesthetic qualities.
   g. The provision of erosion control standards.
   h. The provision of roadside parking areas and lookouts wherever scenic vistas are warranted.

APPENDIX


DELANO
BAKERSFIELD
TAFT
TEHACHAPI
MOJAVE
RIDGECREST
ELIGIBLE SCENIC ROUTES
STATE SYSTEM
COUNTY SYSTEM
See Scenic Highways Element Text For Description

ELIGIBLE SCENIC ROUTE IN KERN COUNTY

Eligible Scenic Routes Designated by the State.

1. Portions of State Route 14 and Highway 395 from north of Mojave to the Inyo County line.

2. State Route 58 from the south end of Mojave through Boron to the San Bernardino County line.

3. State Route 41 traversing the extreme northwest corner of Kern County.

Eligible Scenic Routes Designated by Kern County.

4. Route 58 from Comanche Drive to State Route 14 west of Mojave.

5. The Bakersfield - Glenville Road from the intersection of James Road north to Granite Road, then along Granite Road to State Route 155, then Highway 155 past Alta Sierra to Wofford Heights.

6. State Highway 223 from the junction of Highway 58 to Towerline Road.

7. Highway 178 from the junction of Alfred Harrell Highway to the junction of State Highway 14.

8. The Alfred Harrell Highway from Panorama Drive to Highway 178, then along Comanche Drive to Highway 158.

9. This Route consists of Interstate 5 at the junction of the California Aqueduct to Frazier Road, then along Frazier Mountain Park Road to the Ventura County Line, then along Cuddy Valley Road, Mil Potrero Road, Mt. Pinos (Cerro Noroeste) Road, and State Route 33 to the San Luis Obispo County Line.

10. Bena Road from the intersection of the Edison Highway to the Caliente-Bodfish Road and then to the Bealville Road to State Highway 58.

11. State Route 115 from the intersection of Route 119, then along Elk Hills Road to Brite Road, then along a series of jogs on the following: Brite Road, Dunford Road, Dairy Road, Adohr Road, and Tupman Road.

12. The Caliente-Bodfish Road from Caliente to the Caliente Creek Road, then easterly along Caliente Creek Road, Walker Basin Road, Johns Road, Williams Road, Daily Road, and Walser Road terminating on the Caliente-Bodfish Road at Route 178.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS AND TRANSPORTATION AGENCY EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1120 N STREET
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

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DEC 2 1975
By ... Deputy

November 20, 1975

Board of Supervisors
County of Kern
1415 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, California 93301

Gentlemen:

In 1963 the Legislature established a State Scenic Highway Program with an expressed intent to establish responsibility for the protection and enhancement of California's natural scenic beauty by identifying those portions of the State Highway System which require special scenic conservation treatment. The Legislature also established a Scenic Highway Advisory Committee to develop the criteria for the Program and to advise the Director of the Department of Transportation in the administration of the Program.

Despite modest success in the beginning years, the Program has, of late, become nearly dormant. It appears that much of the Program's slowness is caused by a reluctance in many counties to require formalized land use regulations in rural areas where, because of remoteness, development that would be detrimental to the area's scenic qualities is not imminent. Many areas of the state possess great natural scenic beauty, and, except for the highway itself, are virtually as first viewed by early settlers. In most of these areas, program activity has been noticeably lacking. The Advisory Committee feels that if a significant number of Master Plan highways in these areas were designated, the visibility of the program to the traveling public would be increased, which would, in turn, accelerate acceptance of the program in similar areas of the state.

A method to facilitate designation of truly scenic highway mileage has been suggested which the Advisory Committee feels is worth exploring further. Under the proposal, the designation process would be as follows:

REC'D DEC 3 1975

A. The Scenic Highway Advisory Committee would review the State Scenic Highway System as statutorily described (the so called Master Plan) and determine which highways are:

1. Of unquestionable scenic quality;

2. Of sufficient length to warrant travelers going out of their way to drive the highway or to make the drive a trip in itself;

3. Primarily natural with little man-made development (this is not intended to preclude an occasional small community, farm, ranch, or commercial facility whose primary purpose is to serve the traveler); and

4. Sufficiently remote from the developing areas of the state so that any extensive development of private property in the foreseeable future is not likely.

B. Having defined those highways eligible for this process, the Advisory Committee would then contact the agencies responsible for land use regulations on the land adjacent to these highways. These agencies will be asked to assure the Committee that either:

1. Adequate land use regulation exists; or

2. Any proposed development will be reviewed by the responsible agency which:

   - Will consider detrimental effects on the scenic quality of the highway during its review;
   - Will take whatever steps are necessary to preserve those scenic qualities; and
   - Will assure the Committee that outdoor advertising is or will be adequately regulated to assure conformance with the criteria for outdoor advertising developed by the Committee.

C. On receiving these assurances, the Advisory Committee would recommend designation to the Director of the Department of Transportation. Upon designation, the traditional poppy signs would be placed and the route would be indicated as an official State Scenic Highway on any maps published by the Department.

D. The designated routes would then be periodically reviewed and if it was determined that the scenic quality along a particular highway had deteriorated to the extent that the Advisory Committee no longer could consider the route scenic, they would recommend that designation be rescinded. The responsible agency would, of course, be allowed to respond to this recommendation prior to actual removal of the designation.

E. Other routes in the Scenic Highway System (Master Plan) which are not identified by the Advisory Committee for this special processing would still be eligible for designation and would be considered under the present program criteria.

Your County in the past has not participated fully in the Scenic Highway Program, although interest has been shown from time to time. The purpose of a program revision as discussed in this letter is to generate or renew interest where it is now lacking and to designate those routes that are truly scenic and worthy of California's recognition. We need your comments with regard to the proposed revision and also any other comments or suggestions that you might wish to make.

We are soliciting comments from other counties such as yours to determine if a consensus opinion exists as to the merit and feasibility of the proposal. Your early consideration of this matter will be of valuable assistance to the Advisory Committee in determining its future actions.

Sincerely,

I. V. Denny
Executive Secretary
Scenic Highway Advisory Committee

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